

The lowdown on the hippest highs

The number and complexity of drugs available to youths have increased in recent years. As marijuana and cocaine are joined by Ecstasy, Special K and GHB, the drug culture and its lingo have evolved to accommodate the new drugs and a new generation of users. Here is a guide to some of the more popular drugs, what they do, how youths get them, and the terms they use to talk about drugs and drug use.

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	Cocaine	Ecstasy	Gamma Hydroxy Buterate	Heroin	Ketamine, Ketamine Hydrochloride	LSD	Marijuana	Methamphetamine
What it is	A natural stimulant that comes from coca leaves. Most cocaine in the USA is smuggled here from Mexico and via sea routes.	A synthetic drug with stimulant and hallucinogenic effects. Its chemical structure is similar to methamphetamine and mescaline. The drug generally is imported from northern Europe and sold in clubs or through street dealers. The dealer networks reach into schools, suburban areas and rave parties.	GHB is a central nervous system depressant. Ingredients can be obtained from Internet mail order operations. The ingredients are cooked with water, diluted and usually stored in empty sport drink bottles. Analogs of GHB are gamma-butyrolacton and 1,4-butanediol, which are found in some dietary supplements that can be ordered from the Net. Since most GHB is cooked by individual suppliers, the strength of doses, usually a capful, varies widely.	Heroin is a fast-acting opiate. It comes from morphine, which is extracted from the seed pods of poppy plants. Synthetic drugs that are analogous to heroin include fentanyl and meperidine (marketed as Demerol). These drugs generally are more potent than heroin.	An injectable anesthetic approved for medical use on humans and animals since 1970. In the USA, 90% of the drug is used for veterinary surgery. Gangs have been stealing it from veterinary clinics. It also is smuggled from Mexico. It is sold in club venues, raves and bars.	Lysergic acid diethylamide is a hallucinogen discovered in 1938. It is manufactured from lysergic acid, which is found in a fungus that grows on grains. Dealers obtain it wholesale and sell it at bars, parties and raves, and from their homes. There is generally no way for the user to determine the strength of the dose aside from the word of the dealer.	Marijuana comes from cannabis sativa, the hemp plant. Other forms of cannabis are sinsemilla, hashish and hash oil. Marijuana is a psychoactive, or mind-altering, drug. The active ingredient is THC (delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol). The effect depends on the potency of the THC. Most marijuana contains an average of 3% THC. Sinsemilla, made from the buds and flowering tops of female plants, contains about 7.5% THC. Hashish, the resin from the flowers, has an average of 3.6% THC, with a range as high as 28%, according to the National Institute on Drug Abuse.	Methamphetamine is a psychostimulant, in the same category as cocaine and amphetamine. It is a synthetic that affects the central nervous system and remains in the body longer than cocaine. It is made in clandestine laboratories usually in sparsely populated areas, where it can be difficult for neighbors or police to smell the often pungent chemical reactions. It can be made with inexpensive ingredients found in over-the-counter medicines, such as nasal decongestants.
What it looks like	Cocaine is a fine white crystalline powder that dissolves in water. Dealers may dilute it with corn starch, talcum powder, sugar or amphetamine. Crack cocaine is a smokable compound cooked with ammonia or baking soda and water to remove the neutralizing hydrochloride and produce a potent “rock” that can be smoked, or melted and injected.	Ecstasy generally comes in pill form. The pills are in various colors and are stamped with status symbols, designer logos, cartoon characters, hearts and flowers.	Water, most commonly. It comes as a white powder, tablet or in capsule form. It has no odor.	A white or brownish powder or a sticky, black paste known as “black tar” heroin. It generally is diluted with other drugs or sugar, flour, quinine or powdered milk. It may have a bit of a vinegar smell. In many cities, heroin comes in plastic bags decorated with designs, logos or colored stamps.	Ketamine comes either in liquid form or as a white powder.	LSD comes as tablets or capsules, known as “microdots,” or as a liquid solution with a gelatin medium called “window pane.” Most often it is blotter paper soaked with the drug, perforated into squares and printed with pictures. Other forms include sugar cubes, powder, gelatin sheets or shapes, and powder. It is odorless, colorless and tastes slightly bitter. Heat and light degrade LSD, so many users wrap the blotter paper in foil. The Drug Enforcement administration reports that LSD samples confiscated recently contain 20 to 80 micrograms per dose, less than the 100- to 200 microgram doses reported in the 1960s and early 1970s.	A green, brown or gray mixture of dried, shredded leaves, seeds, stems and flowers. When smoked, it has a distinctive, pungent smell that users may try to cover by burning incense.	White, odorless, crystalline powder that dissolves easily in water and alcohol. Smoked methamphetamine is usually a large, clear crystal that is smoked in a glass pipe. The smoke does not smell. The residue can be resmoked.
How it is used	Cocaine can be sniffed, inhaled, injected, eaten or rubbed onto mucous membranes. Injecting and smoking produce the quickest high.	It is taken orally. Tolerance builds rapidly, so some users take three or four pills at a time.	Most often it is taken in liquid shots. The liquid is bitter, so users might mix it with alcoholic drinks or fruit juices. GHB pills and capsules are taken orally. Heavy users might inject the liquid into their muscles.	Users frequently snort it or smoke it. As an addiction progresses, users will begin injecting the drug.	It is snorted or smoked. Often it is combined with marijuana and Ecstasy. Some abusers inject it.	LSD is taken orally. Users generally eat the blotter paper.	Users roll the leafy mixture into a cigarette rolling paper or smoke it in a regular pipe or water pipe. Some users take tobacco out of cigars and refill the cigars with marijuana.	It can be smoked, snorted, swallowed or injected. Smoking and injecting produces an intense, pleasurable rush that lasts a few minutes. Snorting or ingesting produces a euphoria that is less intense. Users tend to binge, or “run,” on the drug because the pleasurable effects disappear quickly, even before the drug concentration in the blood falls.
Cost	Crack: \$20 to \$250 per gram Cocaine: \$30 to \$200 per gram	\$15 to \$25 a pill	Dealers working clubs sell a shot for \$5 to \$10. A quart costs about \$200.	\$70 to \$300 a gram	\$10 for one injection or snort; a full bottle costs \$100 to \$200	\$5 for a hit, \$200 for a 100-hit sheet. Prices can be as high as \$25 a hit at a rave.	\$25 to \$150 for a quarter-ounce, depending on quality and availability	\$40 to \$330 a gram
What it does	It causes euphoria by stimulating an area in the brain that regulates the sensation of pleasure. Cocaine binds to the neurotransmitter dopamine so that the dopamine cannot be reabsorbed into the neuron. The dopamine buildup causes continuous stimulation of the dopamine-receiving neurons, which causes euphoria.	Users feel euphoric, empathetic and unusually warm and open toward other people. Senses, particularly touch and sight, can feel heightened, so users often favor fuzzy sweaters and other soft-textured clothing. The drug is popular at raves, where youths dance all night with light sticks and other visual enhancements.	GHB relaxes or sedates the body, and slows breathing and the heart rate.	In the brain, heroin is converted into morphine, which binds to opioid receptors. This causes a pleasurable “rush,” and a user’s skin becomes warm and flushed. The user’s arms and legs may feel heavy. Some users experience severe itching and vomiting. After the rush, a user’s heart rate and breathing slow down, sometimes to the point of death. Heroin is considered highly addictive.	It is a disassociative drug that produces effects similar to PCP. Large doses put users into a dreamlike, hallucinogenic state.	It is an unpredictable, mood-altering chemical that takes effect 30 to 90 minutes after it is taken. A user’s pupils dilate, body temperature rises, heart rate and blood pressure increase, and appetite decreases. The effects last as long as 12 hours. Some chronic LSD users can experience flashbacks of their LSD trips days or even years after using the drug. LSD users also may develop schizophrenia or severe depression. LSD is not considered addictive, but users do develop tolerance and must take increasingly larger doses to become intoxicated.	THC binds to protein receptors in the membranes of certain nerve cells. That kicks off a series of cellular reactions that make users feel high. Users may experience perception problems, difficulty remembering or learning new things, loss of coordination, increased heart rate and panic attacks. THC changes the way information is processed by a part of the brain called the hippocampus, which is fundamental to learning, memory and integrating sensory experience with emotion. Long-term use may damage the brain and lungs. THC is absorbed by the fatty tissues in the body and can be detected by a urine test weeks after use.	After an initial rush, users are highly agitated. The drug wears off after six to eight hours. Scientists attribute the rush and the high to abnormally high releases of dopamine, a neurotransmitter that triggers feelings of pleasure. Animal studies show that one dose of methamphetamine damages nerve terminals in brain areas containing dopamine. Large doses can elevate body temperature and cause convulsions. Long-term users can become violent, anxious, confused, insomniac, paranoid, delusional and suicidal.
Its effects	Users will feel euphoric within minutes of use. The effects can last a few minutes or a few hours. Users might feel energetic and talkative, sensitive to sight, sound and touch, and have less need for food or sleep. The faster the absorption, the more intense the high. Cocaine constricts blood vessels, dilates pupils, and increases temperature, heart rate and blood pressure. Large amounts can cause vertigo, tremors, muscle twitches and paranoia. Any amount can induce a sudden heart attack or seizure. Cocaine is particularly dangerous when used with alcohol.	Users usually become hyperactive and sleepless. They might grind their teeth and clench their jaws involuntarily, leading many users to suck on pacifiers and lollipops. Other signs of use include muscle tension, nausea, blurred vision, rapid eye movement, faintness, chills and sweating. Large doses cause a sharp increase in body temperature that can lead to kidney and heart failure. Early research indicates that repeated Ecstasy use damages parts of the brain that regulate mood, sexual response, sleep and pain sensitivity.	It takes effect in 10 to 20 minutes and produces a high that lasts about four hours, depending on the dose. Users feel euphoric, then sleepy. Overdoses result in nausea, vomiting, drowsiness, and headache and can escalate to loss of consciousness and reflexes, trouble breathing, coma and death. Because it can knock out users, GHB has been used as a date-rape drug. It clears quickly from the body, so lab tests at hospitals might not detect it.	Euphoria occurs within second of an intravenous injection, five to eight minutes after being injected into the muscles, and 10 to 15 minutes after being smoked or snorted. After the rush, users feel drowsy.	Users complain of a foul-tasting “drip” when mucous drips from their nasal passages into their throats. Users may babble or speak jibberish. They may believe that their mind has separated from their body or that they are outside themselves and watching their own actions.	Users can swing rapidly from one emotion to another or have visual hallucinations. Users lose sense of time and may believe they can hear colors or see sounds. The sensations generally intensify over several hours, culminating in visions and a sense that time has stopped. If these sensations cause panic or if users experience terrifying feelings of a loss of control, death and despair, they refer to it as a “bad trip.” Users may feel unusually creative and spiritual.	Users become dizzy, have trouble walking, giggle frequently, and have red, bloodshot eyes. Users often binge on junk food and have trouble remembering things that happened only minutes before. They may become focused on ordinary objects or a certain color. The effects usually last two to three hours.	Hyperactivity, decreased appetite, rapid heart rate, irregular heart-beat, increased blood pressure, strokes. Overdoses may cause elevated body temperature and convulsions. Chronic use causes inflammation of the heart lining and psychosis. More than 10,000 people each year visit U.S. emergency rooms with methamphetamine overdoses.
Street names	All-American, Angie, Aunt Nora, base (crack), beam, Bernie, black rock (crack), Blanca, blow, California cornflakes, candy, happy trails, icing, king, lady, nose candy, pearl, powder, sleigh ride, snow, snow cone, soda (injectable cocaine), zip	Adam, beans, blue lips, blue kisses, decadence, disco biscuits, doctor, essence, Eve, kleenex, hug drug, love drug, Scooby snacks, lovers’ speed, sweetarts, X, X’ing, XTC, tulips, Armanis, green nips, white octagons	Cherry meth, easy lay, everclear, fantasy, Georgia Home boy, goop, Grievous Bodily Harm, jib, liquid Ecstasy, liquid X, organic Quaalude, salty war, scoop, sleep 500, soap, vita G	Dope, junk, smack, China white, horse	Black hole, Special K, Vitamin K, K, kit kat, cat Valium, super C, horse tranquilizer	acid, L, blotter, Cid, tabs, doses, trips, microdots	Bud, pot, Mary Jane, blond, can, Cheeba, chunky, Colombia, weed, dope, dew, Don Juan, doobie, fu, ganja, gash, grass, green goddess, herb, hay, jay, KGB, kind, leaf, puff, magic dragon, Rasta, reefer, sen, tea	Amp, B-bombs, Black, Dex, bam, Bennie, Bens, Benz, Benzedrine, black and white, black beauties, black Cadillacs, black Mollies, blue boy, blue belly, bolt, browns, cartwheels, chalk, Co-pilot, crank, crystal, diamonds, diet pills, fives, glass, go, Gonzalez, ice, jelly baby, jelly bean, lid poppers, marathons, meth, 19, pep pills, pixies, road dope, sparklers, speed, white cross
Common lingo among users	Blow blue, blow boost: to inhale cocaine Crisscrossing: to set up a “line” of powder cocaine next to a line of heroin. With a straw in each nostril, the user snorts half of each line and then crosses the straw and snorts the remaining lines. Rock star: a woman who trades sex for crack Speedball: a heroin and cocaine combination	Rolling: getting high on Ecstasy Hippie flipping: combining mushrooms with Ecstasy Kitty flipping: combining ketamine with Ecstasy Candy flipping: combining LSD with Ecstasy Candy flipping on a string: LSD with Ecstasy, followed by cocaine Buy a vowel: to use Ecstasy Stop, drop and roll: to use Ecstasy Floored: to be too drugged to dance Etard: a regular Ecstasy user	G-ber Daze: a coma-like stupor from overdosing	Spoon: the bottom of an aluminum soda can that is used as a tiny bowl to dissolve heroin Speedball: a line of cocaine followed by heroin	Kitty Flippin’: to use ketamine in combination with Ecstasy Bump: a hit of ketamine K-hole: ketamine-induced dreamlike state K-whore: someone who prefers ketamine to other drugs or who takes ketamine exclusively EKG: to combine Ecstasy, ketamine and marijuana	Frying, Flying or Tripping: using LSD Sitter: a sober friend who will look out for you while you are tripping	A-bomb, Atom Bomb: marijuana joint with heroin or opium Joint: marijuana cigarette 3750, Oolies, P-dogs: marijuana and crack cocaine rolled in a joint Banano: marijuana joint laced with cocaine Blunt: hollowed-out cigar filled with marijuana Woolah, primo: a blunt refilled marijuana or crack B-40: a blunt smoked with a 40-ounce bottle of malt liquor Buda, Buddha: high-grade joint filled with crack or opium Candy Blunt: a blunt dipped in cough syrup Caviar, Champagne: a combination of cocaine and marijuana Clicker, Love Boat, Fry sticks: a joint dipped in formaldehyde Cocoa Puff: to smoke cocaine and marijuana Dust blunt, happy stick, wicky: a joint with PCP and marijuana Geek: marijuana and crack Rompups: marijuana with horse tranquilizer Speedboat, squirrel: a combination of marijuana, PCP and crack Spliff: a large joint	Amped: high Amped-out: tired after the high Crank craters: facial sores caused by the drug Paper: a quarter-gram Teenager: 1/16 of a gram Tina: a baggie of methamphetamine Tooter: a straw used to snort the drug Tweeking: getting high Geeking: to do something for hours while high Spin doctors, Tweakers: users Spun-out: to be high on the drug

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